

# News Release

## Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Annual Conference • 21 - 24 March 2005 • Torquay

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**Tuesday 22 March 2005**

*For education correspondents / newsdesks*

### **School trips are an invaluable part of education, says ATL**

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) Conference will today reaffirm its longstanding view that off-site activities, such as school trips, play an invaluable part in the educational experience for all pupils.

As the education union, ATL has always argued that teachers should be empowered to offer the widest possible learning environment and that there is a danger that the value of out-of-classroom learning is being lost in our increasingly litigious society.

The Association's views are increasingly seen as in touch with modern thinking on the subject. The Education and Skills Select Committee has recently published a report concluding that it is convinced of the value of education outside the classroom.

The committee pointed out the benefits of off-site activities in developing social skills, such as communications, particularly for hard to reach children.

This positive approach to out-of-classroom learning has further been supported by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) earlier this month. This was in the light of lessons learned from the Glenridding Beck tragedy, in which a ten-year-old boy drowned in the Lake District. The HSE view is that providers should be risk aware rather than risk averse.

John Puckrin, ATL's honorary secretary, who will move the motion, has fond memories of his own educational school trips, both as a pupil and as a teacher in a south east London comprehensive boys school.

He said: "My own experiences as a pupil in the '60s going on trips to the Normandy beaches and to industrial areas in Britain to visit mines have stayed with me all these years."

He also described a trip he took his own pupils on: “We went from London to York and back in a day,” he recalled. “We visited the lot, including the railway museum and the Viking museum. With teenage boys you would think the dung area of the ‘smellorama’ or the steam trains would be their favourite. But one pupil told me the highlight of the day was York Minster. He was just blown away. What does that tell you?”

Ends

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers’ Annual Conference is taking place at the Riviera International Conference Centre, in Torquay, from Monday 21 March to Thursday 24 March 2005.
2. The ATL Annual Conference will be broadcast live on the internet at: [www.atl.org.uk](http://www.atl.org.uk)
3. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) is an independent, registered trade union and professional association, representing approximately 160,000 teachers, lecturers and support staff in maintained and independent schools, sixth form, tertiary and further education colleges in the United Kingdom.
4. ATL exists to protect and improve the status of teachers, lecturers and other professionals involved in delivering education to further their legitimate professional interests.
5. ATL is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC). It is unaffiliated to any political party and seeks to work constructively with all the main political parties.
6. ATL members receive a regular magazine (Report) reflecting ATL policy and other issues affecting the education sector. If you would like to receive a copy of this please call 020 7782 1589.
7. Further information and all press releases are available on ATL’s website: [www.atl.org.uk](http://www.atl.org.uk)